Whether certain groups of small, dark-skinned people in the Philippines are true Negritos is still a controversial issue. Negritos have been reported in Negros, Palawan, Panay, Luzon, Mindanao, Guimaras, Samar and Polillo. Estel, however, is able to find "no good metrical or photographic evidence for...Negrito groups in any area other than the provinces of Bataan and Zambales on the island of Luzon."[9] Beyer has separated the alleged Negritos of Panay and Negros from the main Negrito group as "non-Negroid or only partially Negroid people who are difficult to classify."[10]

The next racial group to arrive in the archipelago were Indonesians or Proto-Malays (Estel calls them Early Asiatics). Following this group came the Malaysians who may have originated in Central Asia and moved slowly into Southeast Asia and eventually the Philippines. The Malaysians, called Southern Mongoloid by Estel, are found mainly in the coastal regions of the archipelago and compose the bulk of the present population of the Philippines. The Malaysians settled as far north as Luzon; early Iron Age pottery has been found in Rizal and Bulacan provinces and Taboso, Escalante

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[9]Leo A. Estel, "Racial Origin in Northern Indonesia," Journal of East Asiatic Studies, II, No. 3 (April, 1953), p.1.

[10]H. Otley Beyer, Population of the Philippines in 1916: (Población de las Islas Filipinas en 1916). Manila, Philippine Education Company, 1917, p.60.

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(Negros Occidental) which is remarkably like Malaysian finds in west-central Borneo.[11]

The culture of the modern Visayan Filipinos represents more than Indonesian and Malaysian elements. During the 8th or 9th centuries, A.D., emigrants from the empire of Sri-Vishaya pushed into already settled areas of Borneo and southern Philippines. Sri-Vishaya first developed in Sumatra and flourished from the 5th to the 14th centuries, although not as a compact empire during its latter years. Sri-Vishaya was nominally Buddhist, considerably modified by Brahmanistic ideas. Hindu influences also may have entered Sulu from the empire of Champa in southern Annam, Indo-China. In the traditional history of Sulu there is some evidence of Champa settlements in this region between the 9th and 12th centuries, A.D.[12]

Settlers came to Sulu and Mindanao and later to the central and eastern Visayas from one of the chief Sri-Vishayan culture centers, Bandjarmasin (Borneo). Most of the emigrants that reached Panay and Negros, appear to have come from another Sri-Vishayan culture

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[11] H. Otley Beyer, "Outline Review of Philippine Archaeology by Islands and Provinces," The Philippine Journal of Science, LXXVII, Nos. 3-4 (July-August, 1947), p.292.

[12] H. Otley Beyer, "The Philippines Before Magellan. 1: The Hindus in Malaysia," Asia, XXI, No. 10 (October, 1921), p.862.